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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Fourth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 97th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 5 October 1993, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mrs. BADRAN

CONTENTS

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention (continued)

Initial report of Rwanda

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GE.93-18750 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION (agenda item 8) (continued)

Initial report of Rwanda (CRC/C/8/Add.1)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr. Karamage and Mr. Nsabimana (Rwanda) took places at the Committee table.

2. The CHAIRMAN invited the Rwandese delegation to reply to the written questions contained in the list of issues (CRC/C/3/WP.4), beginning with the sections entitled "General implementation measures" and "Definition of the child":

General implementation measures

As this aspect is not dealt with in the report,

1. Please indicate the measures adopted to bring legislation and practice into line with the Convention in particular:

(a) What is the status of the Convention vis-à-vis Rwandese constitutional or other law?

(b) Has it been necessary to amend legislation for the implementation of the Convention and, if so, in what areas?

(c) Can the Convention be invoked before the courts?

2. Please indicate existing or planned national or local machinery for coordinating action on behalf of the child and monitoring the implementation of the Convention;

3. Please indicate the measures adopted to publicize the Convention, its principles and provisions among the adult population, including professional groups, and among children, and the means used to do so;

4. How do you intend to ensure the wide circulation of reports on the implementation of the Convention?

Definition of the child

1. What is meant by "child", in the meaning of article 1 of the Convention under Rwandese legislation?

2. According to paragraph 4 of the report, a conceived child enjoys certain rights on condition that it is born alive. However, a merely conceived child is considered to have been born in all cases where its interest so requires.

What are those conditions?

Are there any court decisions which shed light on what that interest is?

3. Please provide information on the minimum legal age for access to employment, criminal responsibility, the imposition of sentences of death and life imprisonment, enlistment in the armed forces and consent to marriage.

4. Please indicate whether in these respects boys are treated differently from girls and, if so, for what reasons.

3. Mr. KARAMAGE (Rwanda) assured the Committee of his full cooperation and total availability to help it in its noble task. In Rwandese society, children were the most valuable asset. Rwanda had spared no effort to create favourable conditions for the development of the child. Since the celebration of the International Year of the Child, awareness campaigns had been carried out all over the country to ensure that particular attention was paid to children. Rwanda had also taken an active part in national and international meetings on questions relating to children. Following the signature of the peace agreement between the Rwandese Government and the Rwandese Patriotic Front putting an end to 34 months of war, a new era was beginning for Rwanda and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child should thus be strengthened.

4. In reply to question 1 in the section entitled "General implementation measures", he said that the Convention had been ratified by presidential decree on 19 September 1990. In the hierarchy of legal provisions in Rwanda, the Constitution came first, followed by laws and decrees. Once an international instrument had been ratified, it became part of the internal legal system and took its place in the hierarchy of legislative provisions. The provisions of national legislation were already in keeping with the Convention and there had thus been no need to amend them. Since the Convention had become part of the internal legal system, it had the same force of law as other laws and could therefore be invoked before the courts.

5. With regard to question 2, he said he did not believe that any particular machinery had been established. That had not been necessary because the Convention had become part of the internal legal system.

6. Replying to question 3, he said that, when the Convention had been ratified by Rwanda, a summary of the text had been broadcast on national radio. The act of ratification had also been widely publicized among the population. The Ministry of the Family and the Advancement of Women, which was also responsible for the protection of children, had tried to publicize the Convention by means of seminars, statements made on World Children's Day and radio programmes. Rwanda had also received assistance from UNICEF to disseminate information on the Convention. Perhaps assistance could also be requested from the United Nations to ensure that the Convention was more widely disseminated to the masses.

7. With regard to question 4, wide circulation would be ensured so that reports could be consulted at any time and would be accessible to the majority of the population. They would therefore be published in French and, in particular, in the other national language. It should be recalled that the population was 90 per cent illiterate and that only a small part had access to education and knew French.

8. Referring to question 1 in the section entitled "Definition of the Child", he said that the Convention did not specify exactly when a human being was regarded as a child. Rwandese legislation was more specific, stating as it did that "A conceived child enjoys civil rights on condition that it is born alive". In Rwandese legislation, a minor was any boy or girl who had not yet reached the age of 21.

9. With regard to question 2, the interest of a conceived child could be given prominence in certain circumstances, as in the case of an inheritance from the father or mother or in the case of the determination of paternity. Rwandese legislation provided that the interests of a natural child had to be protected. There were court decisions in that regard, but not very many, since there were few conflicts relating to children because society as a whole was concerned about them as weak and vulnerable beings.

10. As far as question 3 was concerned, the minimum age for access to employment was 18. Below that age, the express authorization of the person who exercised paternal authority was required. The Ministry of Labour could also authorize the employment of children aged under 14 on an exceptional and temporary basis taking account of the type of work to be done and the situation of such children. The criminal responsibility of children was engaged if they were aged between 14 and 18 years at the time of the offence. If a sentence of death or life imprisonment was normally applicable for the offence they had committed, they could be sentenced to 10 to 20 years' imprisonment. If a prison sentence or a fine was normally applicable to their offence, the maximum penalties to which they could be sentenced were equal to half of those they would have received if they had been aged 18 years at the time of the offence. The minimum age of consent to marriage was 21. Before that age, the Minister of Justice or his representative could grant an exemption if it was justified on serious grounds. Provisions on that point were contained in the Civil Code of 27 October 1988, which had entered into force in May 1990.

11. In reply to question 4, he said that, under Rwandese legislation, all children were equal regardless of their sex. All children were treated in the same way.

12. Mrs. BELEMBAOGO, speaking on behalf of all members of the Committee, congratulated Rwanda on having ratified the Convention promptly and having submitted its report on time. The Committee nevertheless regretted that the report was so short and did not contain all the information requested in the guidelines that had been communicated to the Government. She thanked the head of the Rwandese delegation for his availability and for all the information he had just provided and said she was convinced that a fruitful dialogue could be established.

13. The purpose of question 1 in the section entitled "General implementation measures" was to determine where the Convention stood in the hierarchy of the provisions of internal law. The Rwandese delegation had said that the Convention had been ratified by ministerial decree and that that was enough to make it a law like any other, which had to be enforced at all levels. Another question that arose in connection with the ratification of a convention related to the possible amendment of legislation. Had the legislation been considered with a view to the possible amendment or deletion of some of its provisions and in order to bring it into line with the Convention?

14. With regard to criminal responsibility (question 3 of the section entitled "Definition of a child"), the Rwandese delegation had said that a child who had committed an offence to which the death penalty applied could be sentenced to 10 to 20 years' imprisonment. According to the Convention, the imprisonment of children could be tolerated only as a last resort. Did Rwandese legislation actually provide that a prison sentence would be imposed only in the last resort? Were there other solutions, such as placement in an educational or vocational training centre? With regard to consent to marriage, the Rwandese delegation had referred to the age of 21. Did that apply both to boys and to girls? In some countries, the legislation provided that girls could marry earlier than boys.

15. Mrs. SANTOS PAIS said that she had great hopes for Rwanda's future following the signature of the peace agreement. Conflicts always had adverse effects on people's lives and children were the first victims. Referring to the Committee's work and the way it carried it out, she said that the Committee monitored the implementation of the Convention in the various countries. It was very important that Governments should provide it with information on the success they had achieved and the problems they had encountered in that regard. The Convention was a very ambitious instrument and the Committee had had to formulate guidelines to help Governments prepare their reports by deciding what was important, if not very important, in the implementation of the Convention. That was why the list of issues contained in the guidelines was so long. The Committee would like Governments to supply information on the issues referred to in the guidelines.

16. In view of the conflict that had just ended in Rwanda, the fact that the report had been submitted on time could only be welcomed. The report was unfortunately very short and the Committee was thus in a difficult position. It wanted to have a frank and fruitful dialogue with the Rwandese delegation and the open-minded attitude the delegation had shown was a good sign. The Committee hoped to receive quite detailed answers in order to be able to help Rwanda.

17. When a Government had ratified the Convention, the Committee wanted to know what measures it had adopted to make the Convention a reality for the authorities, for institutions and, above all, for children. Every country had a constitutional process for the adoption of an international instrument. In some countries, a national law had to be adopted reproducing the content of the Convention. In others, ratification was enough and the Convention had a direct effect, with any citizen and any child being able to invoke it before the courts and any authority being able to refer to one of its provisions in order to ensure that it was implemented. What process existed in Rwanda?

In the event of a discrepancy between the Convention and national legislation, did the Convention take precedence? Those questions might seem formalistic, but, in practice, their effects were far-reaching.

18. As far as publicity for the Convention was concerned, it was interesting to know that there was a children's day, that the authorities took part and that statements were made and seminars organized, but it would also be interesting to know how extensive campaigns to publicize the Convention were. Were some of those campaigns specially organized for children? Children understood things differently from adults. It was not enough to give them the text of the Convention; they also needed explanations and it was necessary to hold discussions with them to find out what they thought and enable them to be involved in the implementation of the text. She welcomed the fact that the Government of Rwanda intended to publish its report in the two national languages.

19. With regard to the definition of the child, she took note of Rwandese legislation providing that a child was regarded as such from the time of conception and pointed out that that provision was fully in keeping with the Convention, which left States parties a great deal of freedom of action in that regard.

20. In Rwanda, the minimum age for access to employment had been set at 18, but parents could authorize their children to work before that age. When they did so, was it because the family was poor or because it was in the higher interests of the child? How was work reconciled with the rights of the child in respect of school enrolment, health and leisure?

21. She shared Mrs. Belembaogo's concern about the length of the custodial sentences to which delinquent minors were liable.

22. By making the minimum age for marriage 18 years for boys and 15 years for girls, was the Civil Code not allowing discrimination between the former and the latter?

23. Mr. HAMMARBERG said that he would like to know precisely how the ratification of the Convention had changed the day-to-day life of Rwandese children.

24. With regard to international assistance, he asked whether Rwanda had referred to the Convention and to its national plan of action in its discussions with donor agencies and countries.

25. Mr. KOLOSOV said that, in his opinion, States parties should not just incorporate the Convention into their internal law. According to article 4 of the Convention, States also had to take appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the Convention. Since the provisions of the Convention were often worded in very general terms, however, each State party must decide on the basis of its own specific characteristics how they were to be implemented.

26. He was not sure whether there was a contradiction between Rwandese legislation, which set the age of majority at 21 years, and article 1 of the Convention, according to which a child meant every human being below the age of 18 years, unless majority was attained earlier.

27. The Civil Code made the minimum age for marriage 18 years for boys and 15 years for girls. It also stated that the future spouses had to obtain the consent of their parents if they were aged under 21. Why were boys and girls also not placed on a footing of equality with regard to the minimum age for marriage?

28. Mr. MOMBESHORA congratulated the Government of Rwanda on having ratified the Convention so quickly and on having submitted its report on time. He nevertheless regretted that the report was not detailed enough. He also expressed the hope that the cease-fire that had just been signed in Rwanda would enable the authorities to implement the Convention. He wished to know whether children's agencies and institutions had taken part in the preparation of the report and what position the Government of Rwanda took on abortion.

29. Mgr. BAMBAREN GASTELUMENDI said that he would like to know whether the Parliament had taken part in any way in the ratification of the Convention. Had Rwanda established an institution which would be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention and ensuring the coordination of various child protection agencies? Was the very high illiteracy rate not an obstacle to the dissemination of the Convention to the population? Were NGOs trying to solve that problem so that the Convention would be accessible to everyone and not only to a small intellectual elite? He also wished to know whether the fact of being illiterate was a mitigating circumstance for a delinquent minor?

30. Mrs. EUFEMIO said that she would also like to know whether Rwanda intended to establish machinery to monitor the implementation of the Convention, particularly in the areas of education, health, labour and justice. It was essential to set up such machinery, which would also be responsible for evaluating the activities of agencies for the protection of children.

31. Mr. KARAMAGE (Rwanda), replying to the questions on the status of the Convention, said that it had been incorporated into the internal legal system and consequently had the same authority as any law in the country. Anyone could invoke it before the courts. However, according to the Constitution, the Parliament ratified only conventions which affected public finances. As that was not the case of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the President had ratified it by a presidential decree. It should also be stressed that an international convention applied to everyone, whether it had been ratified by the President or by the Parliament. Until now, the ratification of the Convention had not led to any amendment of existing legislation. The possibility was, however, not to be ruled out that it might one day be necessary to amend certain legal provisions in order to bring Rwandese legislation into line with the provisions of the Convention.

32. The initial report had been drafted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the cooperation of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Family and the Advancement of Women.

33. In reply to Mrs. Belembaogo, he said that the penalties to which minors were liable depended on the characterization of the offence they had committed. In the event of minor offences and misdemeanours, they were placed in a centre and stayed there a few days at most to be told how they had broken the law. In the case of crimes (murder, parricide, etc.), the penalties provided for by the Penal Code went from five years' imprisonment to death. However, children were in actual fact never liable to more than 20 years' imprisonment, since they usually received a presidential pardon and did not serve their entire service. Under the Penal Code, abortion was infanticide and was harshly punished by Rwandese legislation.

34. When there was a discrepancy between the Convention and national legislation, the matter was decided by the Parliament.

35. He recognized that, apart from the information campaign on the Convention and the publication of the Convention in the Journal officiel, little had been done. On the International Day of the Child, however, the Minister of the Family had visited centres for orphans and deaf-mute children and had drawn attention to the rights provided for in the Convention.

36. In reply to Mr. Kolosov, he said that the age of majority in Rwanda was 21, not 18, as stipulated in the Convention. It should be pointed out that, in the case of marriage, the competent authorities were flexible in order to bring the implementation of the Convention into line with the Civil Code.

37. As far as school enrolment was concerned, facilities were adequate. Illiteracy was the result of the fact that many families hesitated to send their children to school, especially their daughters. Such de facto discrimination between boys and girls was not provided for in national legislation. Children in Rwanda were valuable assets for their families. Girls stayed at home until after puberty in order to be protected from the world of men. There was nevertheless a change going on in Rwandese society that was reducing such discrimination.

38. With regard to the higher interests of the child, he said that the father, mother or guardian protected the interests of the child until he had reached the age of majority, particularly by preventing him from engaging in work that was dangerous or harmful to his health.

39. Referring to machinery for the implementation of the Convention, he said that, because the Convention had been ratified, it had the force of law. In Rwanda, the ratification of a law did not involve machinery for its implementation; it was up to the competent authorities to ensure that it was implemented. He agreed that the machinery for the implementation of the Convention provided for in the text itself of the Convention had to be established and promised that efforts would be made for that purpose.

The Government was aware of that problem and the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Family and the Advancement of Women were taking action along those lines.

40. The CHAIRPERSON thanked the representative of Rwanda for that information and invited his Government to implement the Convention not so much by amending legislation as by influencing cultural practices. The Committee was not unaware that it was difficult to change a country's customs, but no culture was completely static. The community and parents therefore had to be educated in order to eliminate discriminatory practices.

41. Mrs. MASON said that discriminatory practices within a society were much more harmful than inadequate legislation. The Government should change people's attitudes and protect girls from the consequences of early marriage (getting pregnant too soon and too often). Were the law-enforcement authorities as flexible towards children in areas other than marriage, such as the army and work? She wished to know whether the Convention took precedence over national legislation and asked what crimes, apart from murder, could justify a court sentencing an adolescent to 20 years' imprisonment.

42. Mrs. BELEMBAOGO said that she welcomed the promise by the representative of Rwanda that machinery for the implementation of the Convention would be set up and noted that there was a national programme for that purpose in Rwanda. However, she regretted that the report made practically no mention of measures for the implementation of the Convention.

43. With regard to the status of the Convention vis-à-vis national legislation, she had understood from the explanation by the representative of Rwanda that, in the event of a contradiction with the Convention, national texts lapsed or had to be amended. However, the fact that Parliament sometimes had to take a decision in the event of a contradiction was of concern to the members of the Committee with regard to the status of the Convention vis-à-vis the Rwandese legal system. She would also like additional information on the financial implications of the implementation of the Convention. Was such expenditure borne by the Government or shared with other agencies?

44. Mrs. SANTOS PAIS said that she shared the concerns expressed by the preceding speakers. She was of the opinion that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should have appealed more widely to other institutions for the preparation of the initial report. The submission of the report should not be merely a Government formality, but a topic of internal public debate on the best policy for guaranteeing the well-being of children. She also shared Mrs. Belembaogo's concern and could not accept the statement that the implementation of the Convention did not have budgetary implications. Like other international instruments, the Convention on the Rights of the Child set objectives which reflected its universal nature and was intended for countries with very different social and economic structures. Those objectives therefore required some creativity and political will on the part of the States that ratified it. It should be recalled that article 4 of the Convention provided that "States parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention". If a State party did not take

budgetary measures, the ratification of the Convention would be only a political statement that did not make it possible to achieve the objectives set in the Convention.

45. She was also concerned about possible differences between the Convention and national legislation. Since the Convention ranked as a national law, she wished to know what happened if Rwanda adopted a new law which did not fully take account of the provisions of the Convention. According to the principle described by the representative of Rwanda, the later law would repeal all the laws previously in force. That might give rise to considerable practical problems.

46. Measures should also be taken to publicize the Convention. There did not seem to be a national campaign for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. She nevertheless welcomed the fact that the Government of Rwanda had decided to carry out a campaign to make the population more aware of the promotion of human rights.

47. With regard to the question of the age of criminal responsibility, she said that the fact that a child could be liable to a prison sentence of 10 to 20 years was not in keeping with the provisions of the Convention. Such a measure should be taken only in the last resort and she would like some clarifications on that point. She would also like to have some explanations about the discrimination against girls that seemed to be prevalent in Rwanda and urged Rwanda to change its attitude towards girls, in accordance with article 2 of the Convention, which prohibited discrimination based on sex.

48. Mr. HAMMARBERG said that the current discussion with the delegation of Rwanda was unreal. The report contained little substance and the oral statement had not provided answers to the questions asked. It was therefore very difficult to have an idea of what the situation of children in Rwanda was like. According to the recent UNICEF publication entitled "Progress of Nations", the average fertility rate was 8.5 children per woman in Rwanda, one of the highest in the world. He would like to know whether that figure was correct and, if so, what significance it had in terms of family planning.

49. He also wished to know how much was earmarked for the well-being of children, recalling that, under article 4 of the Convention, States parties agreed to take measures to the maximum extent of their available resources. He asked whether Rwanda intended to take administrative or legislative measures to improve the situation of the country's children. He once again deplored the fact that the lack of information did not make it possible to have a constructive dialogue on basic issues relating to the rights of the child. He was concerned that the ratification of the Convention did not seem to have changed the situation of children. He requested the representative of Rwanda to answer his question on the implementation of the Convention and the negotiations with the donor community.

50. Mr. KOLOSOV said that he shared the concerns expressed by the preceding speakers. In his view, it was inconceivable that the ratification of the Convention would not have any financial implications. In that connection, he noted that, according to paragraph 27 of the report, "Article 40 of the Penal Code also requires prison services to separate children from other prisoners,

to the extent to which facilities permit". Such facilities had to be provided and required financial resources under article 37 of the Convention, which stated that "every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults". That was a legal obligation assumed by Governments. He was prepared to give other examples in support of his arguments. He drew the attention of the representative of Rwanda to the preamble to the Convention stating that due account must be taken of "the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child" and asked how that provision was being implemented in Rwanda.

51. Mr. KARAMAGE (Rwanda) said that he wanted to provide explanations on the ratification of the Convention by Rwanda and the status of the Convention vis-à-vis national legislation. In reply to Mrs. Belembaogo, he said that the ratification of an international convention did not mean that it took precedence over national law. Once ratified, the Convention did, of course, become part of the internal legal system, but it had the same status as the country's other laws. The procedure for the enforcement of a law in Rwanda was that, once a law approved by the Council of Ministers had been adopted by the Parliament with or without amendment, it went before the Constitutional Court, which had to ensure that it was in keeping with the Constitution. If the law was declared to be in keeping with the Constitution, it was referred to the President of the Republic for signature and enactment. If it was declared to be contrary to the Constitution, it was sent back to the body which had drafted it. The same was true of an international convention. Once ratified and published in the Journal officiel, a convention which had been approved by the Constitutional Court became part of all the laws applied in Rwanda. The implementation of the Convention was thus a consequence of its ratification.

52. The age of criminal responsibility in Rwanda was 14 years. If the offence committed was a crime, a minor aged between 14 and 18 was liable to 10 to 20 years' imprisonment instead of the death penalty or life imprisonment.

53. The age of enlistment in the armed forces was the age of majority, namely, 21 years, and there was no possible derogation on that point. In reply to the question by the members of the Committee on the financial implications of the Convention, he said that it had been ratified by the Parliament and therefore had financial implications for the national budget. The national plan took account of the implementation of the Convention and the Ministry of Planning had to take measures to earmark resources for that purpose.

54. He had taken note of the comment by Mrs. Santos Pais that the report could not be a mere formality, but must, instead, give rise to a broad public debate involving the authorities of the country, as well as non-governmental organizations and children themselves.

55. With regard to traditions and cultural values which might be contrary to the higher interests of the child, he said that progress had been made by the population as a result of awareness campaigns implemented mainly to eliminate the discrimination to which young girls might be subject. That was one of the

tasks of the National Population Office, which had been established in 1980 and was also responsible for increasing the population's awareness of the problem of birth control.

56. So far, there had been no discussion with the members of the international donor community on the implementation of the Convention. However, the door was not shut and the Rwandese authorities were prepared to hold discussions on that question with any donors which might so wish.

57. Mr. MOMBESHORA recalled that, under article 4 of the Convention, "States parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention". The Rwandese authorities therefore had to take appropriate measures to ensure that there was no longer any possible contradiction between national laws and the Convention. He wished to know what would happen in the courts if there was a contradiction between a provision of the Convention and a provision of a national law.

58. Mr. KARAMAGE (Rwanda) said that the laws were interpreted by the Parliament, which was sovereign. There was no preference between the Convention and national laws. When there was a contradiction between a provision of the Convention and a provision of a national law, the matter was decided by the members of Parliament.

59. Mr. MOMBESHORA said that his question related to the time a contradiction arose when a violation of a right provided for by the Convention was brought before the courts.

60. Mr. KARAMAGE (Rwanda) said that, in such a case, the court concerned had to take a decision based on equity.

61. Mrs. EUFEMIO said that she would like to know by how much educational and health resources, for example, had increased, since the date of Rwanda's ratification of the Convention two years previously.

62. Mr. KARAMAGE (Rwanda) said that there had been no increase in resources in those sectors. He nevertheless stressed that that was not the result of a lack of political will, but of the lack of resources caused by the particular situation in the country in the past few years. Apart from the national defence sector, no sector of national life had benefited from increased resources in the past two years.

63. Mrs. SANTOS PAIS said that Parliament represented various sectors of a country, especially when it had been elected democratically, and those sectors were mobilized mainly by political activities. It was not the task of a Parliament to take account specifically of legal questions. It was true that a court could take a decision in the event of a contradiction between the provisions of the Convention and the provisions of a national law, but that was then a specific question that was the subject of a specific decision by a specific court. That decision would not have any general impact and a situation of discrimination could result from it. It would therefore be advisable for Rwanda to see what measures should be taken so that the

Convention would not remain a dead letter. It would, for example, be helpful to give the Convention general scope so that it could take precedence over national laws.

64. Mr. KARAMAGE (Rwanda) said he recognized that machinery had to be set up and that all bodies in the country had to be mobilized to determine how the Convention could be implemented and followed up.

65. Mr. KOLOSOV said that the report of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery showed that there was a procedure in Rwanda for the emancipation of minors, at the parents' request, at age 18. In addition, children who had not reached the age of 21 years had to obtain the consent of their parents in order to marry. Now that Rwanda had ratified the Convention, were those two procedures still applicable?

66. Mr. KARAMAGE (Rwanda) said that the two procedures were still applicable despite Rwanda's ratification of the Convention. Those were regrettable contradictions, but the relevant national laws were still in force.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.